

THE FIRST DECADE 1987-1997



THE CITY-WIDE FRIENDS of the BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Compiled and Edited by
Berthé M. Gaines, John P. Thomson,
Eleanor Jensen, and Jean Sheikh
1998

The City-Wide Friends choose the words of the distinguished librarian and educator, Vartan Gregorian, to express their dedication to books. At the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the McKim Building, he said:

Libraries have always occupied a central role in our culture. They contain our nation's heritage, the heritage of humanity, the record of its triumphs and failures, the record of mankind's intellectual, scientific and artistic achievements. They are the diaries of the human race, the instruments of civilization, a laboratory of human endeavor, a window of the future, a source of hope, a source of self-renewal. They are the symbol of our community with mankind. They represent the link between the solitary individual and mankind which is our community.

CITY-WIDE FRIENDS

of the

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Education

Public Awareness

Advocacy



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Cover design:

Adapted from a map in *Living in Boston*,
City of Boston, July 1978

ISBN: 0-89073-089-x

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PROLOGUE

Berthé M. Gaines

When W. P. Kinsella wrote in his book *Shoeless Joe*, “If you build it they will come,” he certainly had it right. Whether you build a baseball field, a library, or a movement, people will rally around a common cause.

In the early months of 1981, there were rumors of closing all branch libraries and maintaining only the Central and the Research Library in Copley Square. The passage of Proposition 2½ had forced severe reductions in all city department budgets. The Library’s budget, already woefully inadequate, was almost decimated. Following the rumors, at a meeting held by the Trustees of the Boston Public Library in Rabb Lecture Hall, we learned that what we had feared most was happening: some branch libraries were slated for closing.

As a result of that meeting, Library supporters from every branch library in the city of Boston, from every socio-economic, cultural, ethnic, racial, educational and religious background banded together and mobilized for their common cause: books and libraries. Thus was born the Save Our Library Committee, one of Boston’s finest and most exciting movements.

The Save Our Library Committee decided that its mission would be to support the entire library system and the members became its apostles. This remarkable committee was very democratic. To ensure good working relationships, members’ egos were suppressed and each person’s opinion (even if not adopted) was respected. No permanent officers were elected. Instead, a revolving chair was established, and members volunteered or were chosen to preside over meetings. This method contributed to a feeling of equality and partnership that helped the Save Our Library Committee to flourish.

At its inception, the Committee consisted of about two dozen people. From 1981 to 1983, the Committee waxed to approximately forty members, each person contributing something to the movement. By 1984, the membership had waned to a dozen.

During those years, the Save Our Library Committee used several strategies to try to preserve the branches. With the guidance of the Library lobby they educated the state and federal

legislators and city councilors of the Library's importance to its users and the dire future facing the institution. Committee members made telephone calls, organized meetings, lobbied citizens, held rallies, walked picket lines, wrote petitions, gathered thousands of signatures, and wooed the media for coverage. They met with the President and members of the Board of Trustees, Library administrative staff, the President and members of the Professional Staff Association of the Library, the President and members of the American Federation of State, County, Municipal Employees, the President of the Associates, Library Friends groups, and patrons of the Library. With this concerted, impassioned pressure, the Save Our Library Committee finally succeeded in keeping most of the branches open.

January 1984 saw the installation of a more Library-friendly administration in City Hall. Following the appointment of a Committee member to the Board of trustees of the Library in March 1984, the Save Our Library Committee disbanded.

Within the Save Our Library Committee, one visionary member, John P. Thomson, strongly believed that citizens should form a city-wide support system for the Boston Public Library so that such a committee as Save Our Library would never again be needed. Fortunately for all of us, his dream became a reality.

Berthé M. Gaines, Trustee

Life Member of the City-Wide Friends

GROWING GROWING GROWING

John P. Thomson

The city-wide support system envisioned by the Save Our Library Committee became a reality on June 27, 1987. On that date, fifty charter members attended the first meeting of the City-Wide Friends of the Boston Public Library. The majority of the initial members belonged to previously organized Friends groups from Brighton, Connolly, Dudley, Hyde Park, South Boston, Charlestown, West Roxbury, Parker Hill, and Lower Mills Branches.

On May 21, 1997, the City-Wide Friends celebrated its tenth anniversary. As we look to a future in which the role of public libraries in educating, informing, and connecting all of our citizens has grown more important than ever before, let us review our mission and look back upon our brief history.

OUR MISSION

The City-Wide Friends of the Boston Public Library is a volunteer, community-based organization that seeks to enhance public awareness, recognition, status, and financial support of the library system through advocacy and education.

City-Wide Friends works cooperatively with the administration of the Boston Public Library, branch library Friends, and with other organizations, institutions, and individuals to support strong libraries throughout Boston.

LOOKING BACK: WHAT WE HAVE DONE

Founding members approved the By-laws and Articles of Incorporation at the first annual meeting on June 27, 1987 in the Children's Resource Room, Johnson Building in the Central Library. The membership accepted the new By-laws and Articles of Incorporation as a charitable organization.*

The main speaker was author Dan Wakefield, who entertained the audience of some 50 charter members with stories of his writing career and his earlier days using the Los Angeles Public Library. Among the guests were President of the Board of Trustees, Kevin F. Moloney; Berthé M. Gaines, Trustee; Marianne Rea Luthin, Trustee; Director Arthur Curley, and Lesley Loke, Assistant Director for Community Library Services, who served as Library Liaison to the City-Wide Friends from 1987 to 1994. (Appendix A lists the Board of Directors from 1987-97.)

Most of the material in this history comes from the *Friends Forum*, a quarterly newsletter established in the spring of 1988. Library Director Arthur Curley congratulated the Friends in the first issue: "This achievement is yet another reflection of the spirit of those individual citizens who first brought the vision of Boston's public library into being. My best wishes to your efforts to continue this tradition."

Also in the first issue was a band at the bottom of page one, still in use, saying: "Supporting the entire system." The band lists the main library (Copley) and the branch libraries indicating which branches have active Friends groups. In 1988 there were 11 active Friends groups. Presently there are 21 (Dudley, Hyde Park, Brighton, East Boston, Jamaica Plain, Parker Hill, West End, Charlestown, Egleston, Roslindale, West Roxbury, Codman Square, Faneuil, Lower Mills, South Boston, South End, Connolly, Fields Corner, Mattapan, North End, Uphams Corner), with one more branch library in the process of establishing a group.

**In June 1986 the Library Trustees (Kevin F. Moloney, William M. Bulger, Berthé M. Gaines, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Marianne Rea Luthin) had voted to work closely with the Friends groups in the formation of policies related to their activities and support of the Boston Public Library.*



NEWSLETTER

The FRIENDS of The HYDE PARK BRANCH LIBRARY

A Capital Plan!

Friends of The Hyde Park Branch Library issued a special edition of their newsletter in celebration of the plan for restoration.

Another feature, still included, in the newsletter is the column, "Browsing in the Branches," a compilation of events and programs presented by local Friends groups in the branch libraries. The first issue announced a talk by *The Boston Globe* architecture critic Robert Campbell on "The Architecture of Copley Square." Featured was an article about the ground breaking of the new addition to the West Roxbury Branch Library. (See Branch garden on page 18). Completed in 1990, the addition nearly doubled the space for the new branch. At that time, after one year, the City-Wide Friends had enrolled 150 members, including 17 life members. The first life member of the City-Wide Friends was Kevin F. Moloney, President of the Board of Trustees.

For many years members of the City-Wide Friends have assisted in organizing and strengthening Friends groups in the branch libraries. John P. Thomson and Bob Smith have gone to a number of branches to provide advice on forming such groups. Both were instrumental in organizing the highly successful Hyde Park Friends of the Library in 1981 and in organizing the City-Wide Friends. (See special Centennial Issue of the Friends of the Hyde Park Branch *Newsletter* above.)

To help facilitate the work of the City-Wide Friends, the Trustees allocated office space, now Room 202, in the Johnson Building of the Central Library.*

*See inside of back cover.

Editor of the *Friends Forum* was Lorrey Bianchi, who assumed the City-Wide Friends presidency in the spring of 1989. The spring 1989 issue of the *Friends Forum* announced that the newsletters would be printed through the support of the New England Mutual Life Insurance Company for a period of time.

In the fall of 1989, the City-Wide Friends joined a cooperative effort offering a series of plays presented by the Playwrights Platform. The series was supported by the Boston Public Library, the Friends of Hyde Park, Brighton, and West Roxbury Branch Libraries, and the Mayor's Office of Arts and Humanities.

The City-Wide Friends supported the Trustees' ambitious plan (begun in 1983) to rebuild and renovate the McKim Building. The work is still continuing. The Board of Directors also voted to agree with the concept of enlarging the Library's Board of Trustees from 5 members to 9, with at least one appointee to be a member of the City-Wide Friends and/or a branch library Friends group. As a follow-up, in 1994 the state legislature approved an amendment to the law allowing such expansion.

Also in 1989, the City-Wide Friends recommended that the Library administration create a full-time community relations position to work with library volunteers, Friends groups, and other neighborhood organizations related to improving and supporting our public library system.

THE FIRST CHALLENGE

"Budget Crisis Passes, Mostly. . . ." was the headline in the Fall 1989 *Friends Forum*. Mayor Flynn had proposed severe cuts in the \$22.5 million budget submitted by the Library Trustees, which would cut the Trustees' figure to \$18.5 million. Flynn said the Library must accept its fair share of reduction; but the Library administration saw the mandated cuts as catastrophic.

Acting as a catalyst, the City-Wide Friends, joined with branch Friends and the Associates of the Library to protest the cuts. Letters were sent to the mayor and city councilors. Rallies were held at several branch libraries; and a larger rally at Rabb Lecture Hall attracted nearly 400 persons, with prominent authors appearing and representatives from all the branch libraries. More than 13,000 residents of the city of Boston, including branch Friends groups, signed petitions by Friends asking the city to restore the budget shortfall.

Through the cooperation of its publisher, William O. Taylor, *The Boston Globe* published a full-page advertisement depicting the plight of the library system under the proposed cuts. A trustee and others helped balance the media's coverage with personal donations for an advertisement in the *Boston Herald*.

At the eleventh hour, then Senate President William M. Bulger, Vice-President of the Library Trustees, prevailed on state legislators to vote an additional \$500,000. Supporting his efforts were Boston city councilors and members of the Friends movement. Mayor Flynn restored \$1.5 million to the Library's budget. Despite this action, a \$2 million shortfall remained and severe cuts were necessary, including Saturday and lunch-time closing for most branch libraries, support staff reductions, and Sunday closing of the Central Library for the first time in many years.

Lorrey Bianchi, President of the City-Wide Friends, commented on the success of the Friends' efforts:

We all worked together to show the Legislature, the city administration, and the City Council that the people who love libraries aren't always quiet and aren't willing to see a great library become a second-hand travesty of what it could be. Future budgets may see even tougher struggles to keep the library strong and growing. City-Wide Friends stands as a staunch supporter of the Boston Public Library.

It should be noted that at this time Senate President Bulger began a process that would increase the amount of state payments to the Boston Public Library as the Commonwealth's Library of Last Recourse from approximately \$150,000 in 1978 to approximately \$6.5 million today. These payments are unique to the Boston Public Library, and they are in addition to regular state aid payments to the Boston Public Library.

Senate President Bulger helped to design a new statutory provision and to utilize an existing one in a new way. The first provision protects *all* public libraries and communities throughout the Commonwealth from cuts by city/town governments. It mandates that city/town funding be no less than 102.5% of the average funding for the libraries for the prior three years. The second provision relates to the above-mentioned payments. Both provisions have been very beneficial to the Boston Public Library.

GOOD NEWS

Early in 1990, following receipt of the word that the threatened Library budget had been revised and increased, President of the Trustees, Kevin Moloney paid this tribute: "This change in the Library's circumstances would not have taken place without the many hours of hard work by officers and members of Friends groups throughout the city."

As the City-Wide Friends continued through its third year, members were informed of a new automated system for card holders, with the now-familiar card with its bar code and a lamp on the front. Library use was rising as this new electronic system was introduced.

By the spring of 1990 the Friends had more than 400 members, mostly from metropolitan Boston. Major committees of the Friends were Program Development, Membership, Fundraising, and Media/Publicity. Helped by Levine Associates of Brookline, the Friends created a membership/development process with newly designed applications and other methods of promotion. During 1990 members of the City-Wide Friends Board of Directors met with Sandy Dolnick, formerly executive director of the Friends of the Library, USA. They also promoted a major membership drive in October, with tables for recruitment in the lobbies of the Johnson Building and the McKim Building.

One of the exciting programs presented by the Friends was "Mystery at the BPL," held in Rabb Lecture Hall just before Halloween. Geri Michael-Hackel and Bob Smith of the Program Committee developed the mystery evening. A panel of local mystery writers (Jeremiah Healy, Joan Higgins, Susan Kelly, and William G. Tapply) were questioned by City-Wide Friends President Lorrey Bianchi.

Programming by the City-Wide Friends in both the Central and branch libraries, from the first event with author Dan Wakefield, continued. In May 1991, the sixth annual meeting of the City-Wide Friends featured speaker Jane Manthorne, Curator of Publications for the Boston Public Library.

A milestone for libraries, the creation of the Massachusetts Friends of the Libraries, came in January with the help of City-Wide Friends board members, among them City-Wide President Donald Oakes and John P. Thomson. The statewide group provides a way to work together on the state and regional level on library fundraising, policies, and legislation.

Leadership Conferences have been sponsored regularly by the City-Wide Friends. They are held at the Central Library and provide opportunities for Friends networking. Invitations are sent to all Friends groups in the city. For example, the second conference in 1992 had 40 leaders from 18 Friends groups in attendance for an all-day discussion on the Library and associated matters. Friends heard from Director Arthur Curley about impending budget cuts. Later in the day, Curley escorted the participants on a tour of public and private areas of the McKim Building to demonstrate the plans for the renovation of the building that opened to the public in 1895.

DEFENDING OUR LIBRARIES

Unfortunately, by the spring of 1991 another budget crisis arose. Mayor Flynn's latest recommendation was for a 9% cut from the 1991 budget of \$19,588,910 or \$3.2 million less than the estimated \$21 million needed to level fund our library services. The disturbing headline in the spring 1991 *Friends Forum* read "Here We Go Again: Mayor [Flynn] Proposes Major Cuts in Library Fund."

In response, the City-Wide Friends declared that "We as citizens, Friends, and library patrons must care because the library system is part of the solution to the city's long and short term problems, not a part of the problem."

Again, as in 1989, the City-Wide Friends Board of Directors, in cooperation with branch library Friends groups, promoted the signing of thousands of petitions. They alerted the mayor, city councilors, state representatives, senators, and participants at neighborhood branch meetings to the ramifications of a reduction in funds.

City-Wide Friends President Donald Oakes stated:

Everyone recognizes that money is tight, but in the midst of the great 1930s depression in Boston, our library system remained intact and was not cut badly.... Our library system is part of the solution to our problems. Institutions such as libraries are the bedrock of recovery and must be saved, improved, and maintained at a proper level for all citizens. Reading is precious and must be preserved.

City-Wide Friends continued to work with the Trustees, the Library administration, and The Boston Public Library Foundation, established in 1992, to raise funds for the McKim restoration. The Foundation has since expanded its mission to include financial support for the entire system.

BOOK SALES, PROGRAMS, CONFERENCES

As the economic and budget situation improved by 1992, the City-Wide Friends' attention moved away from advocacy for the Library towards various forms of support: programs, conferences, and regular sales of used books. Credit for making book sales possible, presently the major source of income for the Friends along with membership dues, goes to Trustee Berthé M. Gaines, who strongly recommended to the administration that discontinued books be sold, rather than committed to the City dumpster. Much credit goes as well to Past President Lorrey Bianchi, who chaired the first Friends Book Sale Committee.

Periodic Book Sales to raise funds for "off-budget" items for the Library, using donated and deacquisitioned books from the Library collections, commenced in 1991. Volunteers in City-Wide Friends manage all aspects of the sales, and the proceeds are donated to the Library annually. (A partial listing of items purchased with Book Sale funds is included in Appendix C.)

In the history of book sales – from the first sale to the present – more than twenty volunteers, including Friends President Eleanor Jensen and past Treasurer Gerald Cavanaugh, have helped to process the books, which come primarily from discarded/discontinued books from the Library, often referred to as "deacquisitioned" books.

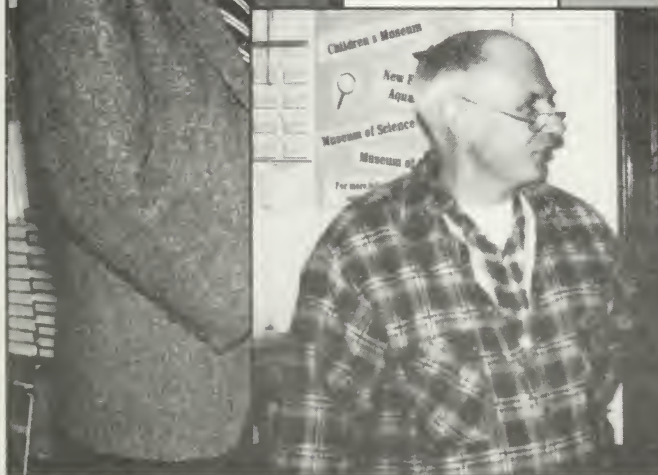
PROFILES



Left:
*John P.
Thomson,
first President
of the City-
Wide Friends.*



Right:
*Joseph J. King,
first Secretary
of the City-
Wide Friends.*



Above: Robert (Bob) Smith, at his frequent post with the Hyde Park Friends. Bob served as Board member of the City-Wide Friends from 1989 to 1993 and attended every BPL Trustees' meeting from 1984 to 1990.



Left: *Aurora
Salvucci, first
Treasurer of
the City-Wide
Friends, looks
at the Friends'
new logo.*

Right: *Berthé
M. Gaines,
Trustee of the
Boston Public
Library from
1984 to the
present and
President,
1993 to 1996.*



At first, sales were held monthly (now six times yearly). As many as 15,000 books have been available at each sale. Income has gone to the Central Library and to branch libraries for items not included in the budget.

As the sales progressed, additional activities and gifts were made possible. In the summer of 1992 a major event took place with the presentation of a check for \$9,000 to the Library for beautification projects and materials for children's programs at branch libraries. Other checks in various amounts have come from the City-Wide Friends book sale proceeds for library needs, both at Central and at the branch libraries.

PROGRESSIVE INNOVATIONS, DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS

Through their newsletter, the Friends continued to highlight innovations by the Library administration. In the spring of 1992, an article featured a "New Search Service at the Library: User Friendly Computers." The computer system replaced the microfilm machines for access to catalog descriptions of books. In recent years, the old furniture in the Johnson Building that housed index cards has been replaced by computer terminals for locating books and other materials held by the Library.

Since the first Annual Meeting there have been many excellent speakers. Among them: Gunars Rutkovskis, Assistant Director for the Boston Public Library Resources and Research Library Services; Sinclair Hitchings, Keeper of Prints; and Associate Director Liam M. Kelly, who spoke of "Technology in the BPL: From Typewriters to Terminals."

In the spring of 1993, the City-Wide Friends honored Rose Moorachian for her support of the Friends movement. She retired as Supervisor of Branch Libraries after nearly 50 years of dedicated service. Other supporters of the Friends movement have been Katherine Dibble, Supervisor for Readers Services in the Research Library, and Diane Farrell, prior to her retirement, Coordinator of Reader and Information Services in the General Library. Among the very helpful Library staff to assist the Friends movement over many years have been Regina Cotter and Garry Wong, both in the Office of Community Library Services.

PROFILES



*Left: Kevin F. Moloney, President of the Library Trustees, 1984-1990.
Right: Senate President William M. Bulger, Vice-President, Library Trustees.
Below: Preparing for the Friends' Valentine Book Sale.*



One of the most successful of the City-Wide Friends' endeavors has been the Literacy Program founded by Board member Jean Sheikh, formerly President of the Literary Council of Reading-Berks, Reading, Pennsylvania.

At the 1993 annual meeting, the City-Wide Friends Board of Directors authorized Jean Sheikh to form an English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) tutoring program for adults, to be run by Friends volunteers in cooperation with the Library. The program was welcomed by Boston Public Library senior staff, especially Lesley Loke, Assistant Director for Community Library Services, and Ellen Graf, Special Projects Librarian.

The first ESL training workshop in May 1994 trained 18 tutors. Families and members of Library staff were given priority to study English with a volunteer tutor. Responding to the great need among adults who require help with literacy and English language skills, the project has grown over the years to nearly 200 tutors. (See Appendix B for listing of contributors to the success of the City-Wide Friends' first ten years.)

Profiled in the *Friends Forum* in 1994 were two outstanding librarians: Lesley Loke, the Library's Liaison to the City-Wide Friends; and Ellen Graf, Liaison to the City-Wide Friends Book Sale Committee.

In the course of the *Friends Forum* interview, Lesley Loke recalled that "during the 1989 and subsequent budget cuts, City-Wide Friends was basically our life-line and served as a pivotal coordinating organization, drawing together other Friends groups, residents, and everyone interested in preserving the Library and its services. We are really grateful to City-Wide Friends for its support," she observed, noting that support included not only budget advocacy but also attention to promoting some of the "smaller needs, but in reality vital needs of the Library": chairs, books, and basic requisites of both Central and branch libraries.

That same year (1994), June Eiselstein joined the Boston Public Library as Supervisor of the General Library, succeeding Lesley Loke as Liaison to the City-Wide Friends. She is an enthusiastic supporter of the Friends movement.

Meanwhile, the ESL program has expanded to include regularly scheduled "Conversations with Friends" where students and other interested persons meet with English-speaking volunteers to practice their English. Students come from 45 countries with native languages ranging from Arabic to Vietnamese. Conversation groups have now been formed in Roslindale and Brighton, and others are in process of formation with plans for two more tutoring programs at Mattapan and Grove Hall.

Training workshops for tutors, conducted by Madelyn Morales, a master trainer with the Commonwealth Literacy Corps, are held quarterly. Tutors commit three to five hours a week for at least six months. Currently there are 83 active tutor/student pairs. Reviewing the expansion of the ESL activities, President Eleanor Jensen declared, "We are proud of the program and the dedication of the volunteer tutors involved."

The Boston Public Library Foundation has supported the Literacy Program of the City-Wide Friends financially through a \$45,000 grant from the law firm of Day, Berry and Howard. The Literacy Program has been buttressed by additional smaller donations in subsequent years. Friends tutors have also won grants from their employers, and the Library has helped support training through The Boston Globe Foundation Fund.

As we review our book sales and the range of things they have supported, we take pause and remember what the distinguished Boston poet David McCord said in celebration of the Library's Centennial:

A library in any of its waking hours is a fair cross-section of the nation. People go there to read for information, inspiration, and recreation; out of despair and solitude, to strengthen belief, to brighten the rusty armor of courage and hope. The very old go there; the children use it; the scholar, musician, artist, teacher, writer, editor; the professional man and the businessman — the fellow far from home, the man in the next block: all turn to the library every working hour of the day.

David McCord's Library is our Library, the noble institution the Friends support.

FRIENDS SEEK FEDERAL FUNDING

In 1995 City-Wide Friends volunteers collected signatures on approximately 2,000 postcards to urge the U.S. House of Representatives to raise federal funding for libraries to the level of \$1.00 per person. The response of the public was an eye-opener – the depth of the public's appreciation of the importance of libraries to the well-being of the nation was shown by their comments, a sampling of which follows:

Libraries are the first most accessible seat of learning to everyone regardless of income. Isn't this what separates us from third world dictatorships? Is learning only for the wealthy? We as Americans (all Americans!) deserve the best.

Libraries are the great storehouses of knowledge – accessible to all, they are our truest example of democracy. Without them, the foundations of a free and just society will crumble.

Where else will Americans turn for guidance and access to information in any of the new forms or formats (i.e., CD-ROM, Internet) but to the libraries and librarians on whose services and skills they have always been able to depend. Libraries are a basic part of American life.

I bring my son here every week. It is important for our children to have a clean, efficient library with a vast selection of books and newspapers. Such a library needs more federal funding.

RECENT APPOINTMENTS

1996 ELEANOR JENSEN, President of the City-Wide Friends, appointed by the Board of Library Commissioners to the Boston Region Interim Planning Committee.

1996 M. BARBARA PERRY, Secretary of the City-Wide Friends (and President of the Charlestown Branch Friends) appointed to the Search Committee for a new President of the Boston Public Library.

1997 JEAN SHEIKH, Chair of the ESL Committee, appointed to the Trustees' Education Committee. At this time, the Library continues to use ESL for English-as-a-Second Language. In other parts of the nation, ESOL is used, standing for English-for-Speakers-of-Other-Languages.

1997 JOHN P. THOMSON, President Emeritus of the City-Wide Friends, appointed to the Trustees' Examining Committee (1997-1999).

GENERAL PURPOSES

As the City-Wide Friends of the Boston Public Library begins its eleventh year, it may be appropriate to present the organization's original "General Purposes," outlined in the Articles of Incorporation, first approved ten years ago in May, 1987:

The purposes of this non-profit organization shall be to maintain an association of persons to stimulate public support, understanding and use of the Boston Public Library system, its main library and its branch libraries; to encourage, give and receive gifts, endowments and bequests for the benefit of the Boston Public Library and allied institutions in developing library services and facilities for library patrons, in keeping with the historic tradition of fine public library service in Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States of America.

WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW?

As an outgrowth of the Book Sales and the volume of books (particularly Young Adult) donated for sale, the City-Wide Friends have instituted a program of donating books to non-profit schools, shelters, care facilities, and other organizations that seek to serve people living on very limited budgets.

The English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) program continues to grow, co-chaired by Jean Sheikh and Beverly Ross. The program is actively supported by June Eiselstein, Library Liaison to the City-Wide Friends, and Ellen Graf, chair of the Library's Coordinating Committee for Literacy.

The *Friends Forum*, the newsletter of the City-Wide Friends, has become a vital vehicle to publicize their work and to keep members aware of general library concerns.

Below: The garden and fountain at the rear of the West Roxbury Branch Library, designed, planted, and maintained by the Friends of the Branch, was dedicated in 1989. Conceived by Alice Hennessey, this peaceful, idyllic place is enjoyed by library patrons and Friends from throughout the city.



UP-DATE

As we mourn the passing of former Director Arthur Curley, a true pioneer in bringing books and learning to everyone, we remember his tribute to Friends groups in an interview with the *Friends Forum* in 1989:

They are absolutely essential. Everywhere I've worked, I've helped develop Friends groups when there weren't any. Community links with the library are keys for communication about what's needed, what's working, what should be changed.

Now we look to the future with Curley's successor, Bernard Margolis. In an interview in *The Boston Globe* by John Yemma (3/29/98) celebrating the Library's Sesquicentennial, Yemma called Margolis a "new type of librarian for a new type of public library." "He is a community ambassador, a master of ceremonies. He sells. He promotes. He cheerleads."

The new president discussed the approaching millennium. He noted that "in the age of cocooning, privatizing, mall roaming, and cyber surfing," the Library might seem "a little shopworn," the use of books as instruments of information-transfer, "dying." Not so! Quietly positive, President Margolis promised that the Boston Public Library will continue to bring the public to its doors, connect them with millions of books, audio tapes, videocassettes, periodicals, and more, yet – at the same time – offer them the latest electronic tools of communication.

A DISASTER FLOODS THE LIBRARY

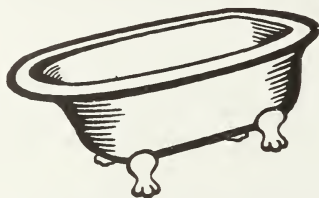
In the history of book and art treasures, many catastrophes have occurred. The earliest was the burning of the library in Alexandria, Egypt. Horrendous, too were the art and books destroyed by flood in Florence, Italy, and the holdings of the Los Angeles Public Library ravaged by water and fire.

Such a disaster struck the Library in August 1998, just as the Friends were completing this history. The eruption of a water main flooded the basements of the Johnson Building and the recently restored McKim Building. The destruction of rare treasures was reported extensively in the media, and the *Friends Forum* issued a special Flood Edition. On page 20 are a few of the visual analogies of what happened in the flood.

BLOATED BOOKS

Flood Fact

Millions of gallons of water flooded the Central Library on August 16, 1998. The average household bathtub holds about 20 gallons of water.



Flood Fact

The process used to remove moisture from books is very similar to the process used to make freeze-dried coffee.



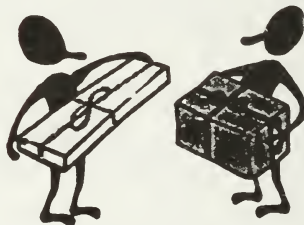
Flood Fact

Dozens of maps were air dried in the Tea Room of the McKim Building



Flood Fact

Donations of cash, materials, and services began within a few hours of the flood. Donors included large corporations and private citizens.



Other FLOOD FACTS:

“Approximately 30% of the materials in the Government Documents and Science Reference Departments were submerged.”

“Portable air conditioning units and dehumidifiers lowered room temperature and reduced humidity, thus prolonging the time that recovery could be accomplished.”

Excerpts from *The Boston Globe* (8/23/98):

“For many librarians at the Boston Public Library, the sight of muddy documents and bloated books in the flooded basement was like watching a tragic accident.”

“As the enormous losses at the BPL have sunk in, many librarians have behaved like grieving relatives. Crying jags, headaches, upset stomachs, and sleepless nights have been common, symptoms often linked to the loss of loved ones.”

A grieving librarian in Government Documents: “It’s about our heritage, people learning what our government is about.” (In awesome irony, the Department was praised as a Federal Depository just five years ago before the move to the basement level because “the environmental factors in the library have changed dramatically since the last inspection. There is now air conditioning, humidity control, and the storage area has been waterproofed.”)

The Curator of the Science Reference Department: “It’s your identity, it’s who you are.”

Immediate help was needed to deal with the awful devastation: boxes for damaged materials, trucks, volunteers, and cash. From individuals, businesses and corporations, from people who care about books and libraries, the response has been overwhelming.

True to their mission, members of the City-Wide Friends responded immediately. At the Library’s press conference, on August 20, Mayor Thomas M. Menino appealed for donations to the library relief fund. At that time, Eleanor Jensen – with all members of the board in attendance – presented a check in the amount of \$10,000 representing the year’s book sales. A few days later she received a letter jointly signed by President Bernard Margolis and Kevin Phelan, Chairman of The Boston Public Library Foundation* acknowledging the Friends’ “quick and generous response to the catastrophic flood.”

**The Trustees of the Boston Public Library have requested that The Foundation act as their agent to receive and acknowledge donations.*

APPENDIX A

Board of Directors

1987-1997

Officers, 1987-89: John P. Thomson, president; Lorrey Bianchi, vice-president; Aurora Salvucci, treasurer; Joseph King, secretary; Donald Oakes, Robert Smith, and Edward Sweda Jr.

Officers, 1989-1991: Lorrey Bianchi, president; Donald Oakes, vice-president; Aurora Salvucci, treasurer; John P. Thomson, corresponding secretary; Jane Borrowman, recording secretary; Joseph King, Carl Lundquist, Barbara Oakes, Robert Smith, and Edward Sweda Jr. (legislative representative).

Officers, 1991-1993: Donald Oakes, president; Carl W. Lundquist, vice-president; Aurora Salvucci, treasurer; Geri Michael-Hackel, secretary; Jane Borrowman, Joseph King, Barbara Oakes, Karen Petersen, Robert Smith, John P. Thomson, and Edward Sweda Jr.

Officers, 1993-1994: Geri Michael-Hackel, president; Lois E. Stryker, vice-president; Gerald F. Cavanaugh, treasurer; Eleanor Jensen, secretary; Marcia Goober, T. Harrison Hamilton, Gail Ide, Donald Oakes, and Andrea Quigley.

Officers, 1994-1995: Eleanor Jensen, president; Barbara Perry, secretary; Gerald Cavanaugh, treasurer; Barbara D'Angelo, Gail Ide, Bobbie Patrick, Francine Pennino, Julie Porter, Aileen Rice, and Jean Sheikh.

Officers, 1995-1997: Eleanor Jensen, president; Francine Pennino, vice-president and treasurer; Barbara Perry, secretary; Tracey Cusick, Wayne Dudley, Ginny Gass, Bobbie Patrick, Aileen Rice, and Jean Sheikh.

APPENDIX B

Thanks to the City-Wide Friends Officers, Directors, Book Sale, and English-as-a-Second Language volunteers who made our first ten years a success. Thanks also to Library Trustees, Administrators, and Staff.*

Renee Arb	ESL
Patricia Ascher	ESL
Joan Back	ESL
Andrea Bader	ESL
Kay Bader	ESL
Eve Beer	ESL
Lorrey Bianchi	Board
David Billo	Book Sale
Jane Borrowman	Board
Kathie Bowe	Book Sale
William M. Bulger	BPL Board of Trustees
Eleanore Carter	ESL
Gerald Cavanaugh	Board, Book Sale
Dominique Coiro	ESL
Naney Cordopatri	ESL
Regina Cotter	BPL Community Library Services Office
Linda Crescenzo	ESL
Tracey Cusiek	Board, ESL
Barbara D'Angelo	Board, ESL
Denise Davis	ESL
Emily Den	ESL
Nancy F. DeRoode	Book Sale
Rene P. Deveau	Book Sale
Jay Dia	ESL
Brian Doherty	ESL
Wayne Dudley	Board
June Eiselstein	BPL Sup. Gen. Lib., Library Liaison, ESL
Jody Eldredge	BPL Coordinator of Tour Guides, ESL
Anne Fernandes	Book Sale
Domingo Fernandes	Book Sale
Ralph Flynn	Book Sale
Berthé M. Gaines	BPL Board of Trustees, Save Our Library
Wendy Gallo	ESL
Ginny Gass	Board
Susan Gillespie	ESL
Marcia Goober	Board
Ellen Graf	BPL Spec. Proj. Dir., Book Sale Liaison, ESL
Barbara Grant	Book Sale
Gavin Grant	ESL
Jeff Green	ESL
Harrison Hamilton	Board

Kathleen Hegarty	BPL Staff Officer, Special Programs/Services
Myriam Hernandez	ESL
Molly Hewitt	ESL
Brad Houston	ESL
Gail B. Ide	Board
Eleanor Jensen	Board, Book Sale
Georgianna Johnson	ESL
Dorothy Jones	ESL
Tom Kane	ESL
Joseph King	Board, Save Our Library
Mary Louise Knapp	ESL, Book Sale
Kathleen Koplik	ESL
Brenda Lew	Book Sale
Elliot Libby	ESL
Lesley Loke	BPL Ass't Dir. CLS, Library Liaison
Carl Lundquist	Board
Robert Mackay	Book Sale
Mary MacLean	ESL
Jane Manthorne	BPL Ass't Dir., Curator of Pub's, Book Sale
Judy Mason	ESL
Joan Mather	ESL
Kevin McGinty	ESL
Jaime Medrano	ESL
Joseph Merriam	Book Sale
Geri Michael-Hackel	Board
Alice Mills	ESL, Conversations with Friends
Kevin Moloney	BPL Board of Trustees
Madelyn Morales	ESL Trainer
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Reva Morrison	ESL
Kitty Nash	ESL
Mary Natale	Board
Karen Norton	Board
Barbara Oakes	Board
Donald Oakes	Board
Bobbie Patrick	ESL, Board
Susan Peecher	ESL
Francine Pennino	Board, Book Sale
Barbara Perry	Board
Karen Petersen	Board
Dorothea Piranian	ESL
Julie Porter	Board
Shirley Ress	ESL
Aileen Rice	Board
Marc Roberts	ESL
Beverly Ross	Exec. Dir., Co-Chair ESL, Book Sale
Judy Ryerson	ESL

Aurora Salvucci	Board, Book Sale
Jean Sheikh	Board, Chair ESL
Barry Silverman	ESL, Conversations with Friends
Darcie Smith	ESL
Mary Jane Smith	Book Sale
Robert Smith	Board, Save Our Library
Frances Southern	ESL
Susan Squillante	ESL
Lois Stryker	Board
Martin Sullivan	ESL
Edward Sweda, Jr.	Board
John P. Thomson	Board, Save Our Library
Kay Whelan	ESL
Laura White	<i>Friends Forum</i>
Laura White	ESL
Garry Wong	BPL Community Library Services Office

**We apologize for any inadvertent omission of
ESL Tutors, Book Sale volunteers, and others.*

APPENDIX C

Major City-Wide Friends Donations to the
Boston Public Library with Book Sale Receipts:

1991

Stacking chairs for the Central Library

1992

Landscaping outside Boston Room, Central Library

1993

Preservation of reference materials
Additional chairs for meetings

1994

Microprocessing of records
Book return at Johnson Building
Fax machines to branches
Salary of Research Library intern for two years
Cost of Dartmouth Street opening (ceremony)

1995

Renovation of conference room on concourse
Wall-mounted exhibits
Folding tables for the branches
Fax machines for the branches

1996

Direct gifts to branch librarians for special projects and
Miscellaneous items to make programming more exciting
Annual Family pass to the New England Aquarium
Book donations
Sherrill House
Long Island Shelter
Supplementary Program of Educational Skills (SPES)
Boston Partners in Education
Blackstone School
St. Francis House
Judge Connelly Youth Center
New England Conservatory

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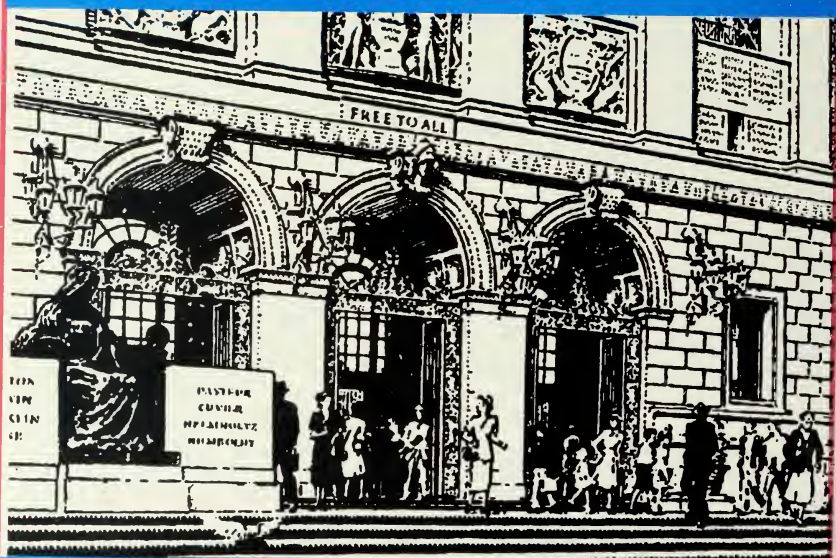


Illustration by Rudolph Ruzicka